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FRESNO CAREER-CRIMINAL CONVICTED ON 16 COUNTS OF CONSPIRACY, CREDIT CARD FRAUD, AND IDENTITY THEFT

FRESNO—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today KEITH DAVID GOODWIN, 30, of Fresno was convicted late Tuesday afternoon of conspiracy, nine counts of credit card fraud, four counts of identity theft, and four counts of aggravated identity theft stemming from identity theft, purchasing goods using fraudulently obtained credit cards, and selling the goods to local contractors. The guilty verdict was returned by a federal jury in Fresno after a 20-day trial before United States District Judge Anthony W. Ishii.

This case is the product of an extensive investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Fresno Police Department.

According to Assistant United States Attorneys Stanley A. Boone and Sheila K. Oberto, who prosecuted the case, the evidence introduced at trial showed that the defendant stole the identities of individuals who worked at mortgage companies and a realty office. He then took those identities and filed online for credit cards with Home Depot, Sam's Club, Zales and JC Penny's in various locations, primarily in the Fresno area. Using these fraudulently acquired credit card account numbers, the defendant then went to these businesses and purchased goods for thousands of dollars. The defendant usually patronized the Home Depot and purchased thousands of dollars in goods and equipment throughout the Central Valley from Turlock to Bakersfield and out of state. The evidence at trial showed that the defendant then took this merchandise and sold it to local contractors, Gerald Edwards of

Executive Home Repair, Albert Jackson, and others for 50 cents on the dollar. This crime spree occurred from April 2005 to November 2005, except for one interruption when the defendant violated parole and was returned to state prison. Once released, the defendant continued where he had left off using others to acquire the identities and then purchasing the goods himself and with others. This illegal activity continued until November 11, 2005 when the defendant was arrested at Wal-Mart in Fresno using a fraudulent identity and attempting to purchase \$3,000 in electronic merchandise.

“Identity theft has become epidemic in California,” said United States Attorney Scott. “Some may regard this felony as easy money. But it can ruin a victim’s credit, and widespread fraud increases fees and prices for everyone. With our state and local counterparts, we are working hard to ensure quick detection and strict punishment in these cases.”

GOODWIN’s co-defendants, CHRISTOPHER SEALS, 32, and ANTHONY HUNT, 30, both of Fresno previously pleaded guilty to their involvement in the scheme.

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